



*Tree of Life*, 1992, Emilio Cruz,  
Pastel on paper.



## **BETWEEN TWO WORLDS**

### **The Alitash Kebede Collection**

**Los Angeles, CA** – The California African American Museum presents “**Between Two Worlds: The Alitash Kebede Collection**,” a powerful exhibition of more than 100 works documenting Kebede’s friendships, influences, politics and finally, her own identity as a collector, an Ethiopian and a naturalized American citizen. The exhibition is open **June 14–September 2, 2007**, and features a number of discussions and workshops exploring the exhibition’s themes. The original touring exhibition, “The Alitash Kebede Collection of African American Art,” is organized by Landau Traveling Exhibitions, Los Angeles, and subsequently modified and curated by the California African American Museum.

Alitash Kebede came to the United States in the 1970s to attend school. She remained here during twenty years of political unrest in Ethiopia, building an identity and an art collection while expecting to return when political exigency allowed. During that time, Kebede befriended a community of artists, creating an extended family and a life between two worlds.

Through elements of Kebede’s larger collection, the exhibition is comprised of African American artists who are largely responsible for furthering the black aesthetic, including Emilio Cruz, Jacob Lawrence, Richard Mayhew and Betye Saar; as well as one of the fathers of contemporary African art, Skunder Boghossian. The collection also features younger artists who have established themselves in the United States, including Todd Gray, and Allison and Lezley Saar.

Though an extensive collection, Kebede did not acquire it easily. She muses that her collection was pieced together with nickels and dimes as she often purchased works on installment payments. Much of the work was special to the artists themselves, kept in their studios or homes, and purchased when Kebede discovered these treasures that spoke either of her relationship with the artists or about her individual, complex identity. Kebede’s collection also represents her strong desire to preserve compelling works that can inspire new generations, and

her drive to support emerging and established Black artists, conserving an African and African American art legacy. Special programs in conjunction with “Between Two Worlds” include:

■ **THE ART OF COLLECTING Saturday, June 16, 2007 / 1 pm**

Collectors, Dr. Leon O. Banks (CAAM State Board Member), Debra Martin Chase (producer), Tim Francis (attorney), Jan Baum (gallerist), Betye Saar (artist), and Alitash Kebede discuss collecting then and now, noting significant differences in the art collector’s market and culture. Panelists detail acquisition according to means and taste, as well how collecting practices inevitably express who we are.

■ **A COLLECTOR’S CHOICE Saturday, June 23, 2007 / 1 pm**

Mar Hollingsworth, CAAM Curator, involves workshop participants in creating a gallery model with sample miniature art works and labels, emphasizing the curatorial aspect of hanging art for either the home gallery or a small, professional one. CAAM provides all materials. For young adults and over. Reservations: 213-744-2024.

■ **FANTASTIC CREATURES Saturday, July 21, 2007 / 1 pm**

Make a fantastic creature from cut out shapes and write a story about it based on the work of artists in the exhibition. A CAAM Gallery Educator will provide the inspiration. Ages 10 and up.

■ **LIVING THROUGH ART Saturday, July 28, 2007 / 1 pm**

jill moniz, CAAM Visual Arts Curator, and Alitash Kebede discuss Kebede’s life, politics and collecting.

■ **IN WHOSE HANDS? Sunday, August 12, 2007 / 1 pm**

jill moniz and Steven Nelson, Assistant Professor of Art History at UCLA, discuss the whereabouts of pillaged and contemporary African Art. Who owns it, where is it displayed, and why is so much of Africa’s art retained outside the continent?

■ **BASICS OF WATERCOLOR PAINTING Saturday, August 18, 2007 / 1 pm**

Participants learn techniques such as wet-into-wet blending to create an original watercolor. Maybe somewhere within you lurks the talent of Richard Mayhew, Romare Bearden or Richard Yarde, artists featured in *Between Two Worlds*. Instructor: Milton Loupe. Reservations required as well as registrants’ availability for the entire class period. Reservations: 213-744-2024. Ages: 10 and up.

The **California African American Museum (CAAM)** researches, collects, preserves and interprets for public enrichment the history, art and culture of African Americans. Chartered by the California State Legislature in 1977, CAAM is a state supported institution and a partner with the 501(c)(3) non-profit organization Friends, the Foundation of the California African American Museum. In addition to its permanent collection, *The African American Journey West*, CAAM hosts specially mounted exhibitions curated through loans and its own collection, and tours CAAM exhibitions through California and the nation. Located at 600 State Drive in Exposition Park, the museum is open to the public Tuesday-Saturday 10am-5pm, and Sundays 11am-5pm. Admission is always free.



*The Lady and the Arch*, 1980,  
Skunder Boghossian, Gouache on paper.